

The President's Volunteer Service Award

About the Award

Honoring Americans Who Make a difference by Volunteering

Every day, millions of Americans volunteer, using their time, talents, and compassion to make a difference in the lives of others. By mentoring a child, caring for an elderly neighbor, teaching someone to read, or bringing food and clothes to those who need them, Americans are helping to foster a cultured service citizenship, and responsibility for generations to come. It is through these acts of kindness and decency that we are able to demonstrate the true character and compassion of our country.

Recognizing and honoring volunteers sets a standard for service to others. It encourages a sustained commitment to civic participation and inspires others to make volunteering a central part of their lives. The President's Volunteer Award is a Presidential recognition program, for Americans of all ages, contribute a significant amount of time to volunteer service. The program recognizes individuals, families, and groups that have achieved a certain standard – measured by the number of hours served over a 12-month period.

Given their ongoing service activity, many individuals, families, and groups may have already met the requirements to earn the President's Volunteer Service Award.

The President's Volunteer Service Award was created to recognize the tens of millions of Americans who have made a sustained commitment to volunteer service. The award is given to individuals, families and groups that have demonstrated outstanding volunteer service and civic participation over the course of a 12-month period.

Background

America has a long and proud tradition of volunteer service. Now more than ever, volunteers are renewing their commitment to helping others and making new connections that bring us closer together as families, as neighbors, as communities, and as a Nation.

In his 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush issued a challenge to all Americans to make time to help their neighbors, communities, and Nation through service. He called on each person to dedicate at least 4000 hours – or two years – to service over the course of their lives. He created the USA Freedom Corps to help all Americans answer his call to service and help foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility.

In 2003, President Bush created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to find ways to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making in our Nation. Chaired by two-time Superbowl Champion Darrell Green, with former U.S. senators Robert Dole and John Glenn as honorary co-chairs, the Council comprises

leaders in government, media, entertainment, business, nonprofit, and volunteer service organizations, as well as community volunteers.

The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation created the Volunteer Service Award program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. This type of recognition is also designed to set a standard for every American – to encourage a sustained commitment to helping others and a lifelong habit of service.

What Do Recipients Receive?

Award recipients receive:

- An official President's Volunteer Service pin
- A personalized certificate of achievement
- A note of congratulations from the President of the United States
- A letter from the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation

Recipients are eligible to receive the award once every 12 months.

Earn the Award

Any individual, family, or group can receive Presidential recognition for annual and lifelong commitment to volunteer service at home or abroad. The following are the eligibility requirements:

Award	Age 0-14	Age 15-18	Adults	Families/Groups
Bronze Level	50-74 hrs	100-249 hrs	100-249 hrs	200-499 hrs
Silver Level	75-99 hrs	250-499 hrs	250-499 hrs	500-999 hrs
Gold Level	100 hrs or more	500 hrs or more	500 hrs or more	1000 hrs or more
All Ages	4,000 or more hours of volunteer service over a lifetime			

Guidelines

To earn an award, individuals, families and groups must keep a record of volunteer activities and hours served. This Record of Service may be kept as a diary or calendar or tracked online using the **USA Freedom Corps Record of Service**.

Individuals must submit their records to “certifying organizations” that will review and verify their records and order and distribute the award. Nonprofit, community and faith-based organization, businesses, schools and colleges, membership and trade associations, and federal, state or local government agencies can all serve as certifying organizations.

To be recognized, service activities should meet national or community needs in the area, this includes the areas of youth achievements, parks and open spaces, health care communities, and public safety and emergency response.

Activities should be unpaid and may not include court-ordered community service.